



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Upper Colorado Region
Provo Area Office
302 East 1860 South
Provo, UT 84606-7317

IN REPLY REFER TO:

PRO-700
ENV-6.00

DEC 23 2013

Interested Persons, Organizations, and Agencies (See Enclosed List)

Subject: Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) – Steinaker Service Canal Modification Project (Project) in Uintah County, Utah

Dear Interested Persons:

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, the Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office has completed the Draft EA. The Draft EA fulfills the requirements of NEPA as well as the Council on Environmental Quality and Department of the Interior regulations implementing NEPA. The Draft EA states the action that will be implemented and describes the effects of enclosing the Steinaker Service Canal (Canal).

Reclamation proposes to authorize and provide funding to the Uintah Water Conservancy District (District) to modify the Canal by enclosing it in a pressurized pipe. The Canal starts at Steinaker Reservoir spillway and conveys water approximately 12 miles south to its end. Because of funding limitations, the District desires to enclose the Canal in phases as funding becomes available; however, the Draft EA is being developed for the entire 12 miles of Canal.

Steinaker Dam and Reservoir are located in Uintah County, Utah, about 3.5 miles north of Vernal, Utah. Steinaker Dam, a feature of the Vernal Unit of the Central Utah Project, was completed in 1962. Steinaker Reservoir is an offstream facility which receives diversions from Ashley Creek via the Steinaker Feeder Canal. Releases from Steinaker Dam are discharged into the Canal. Currently, the Canal carries approximately 250 cubic feet per second of irrigation water to users in the Ashley Valley area.

Reclamation encourages public participation throughout the NEPA process. The public have had two opportunities to provide formal comments: during the initial 30-day comment period and public scoping meeting held on June 18, 2013, at the public library in Vernal, and again now with a 30-day comment period with the publication of the Draft EA.

We invite interested parties to comment on the Draft EA. Comments may be provided to our office until January 31, 2014. This letter is being sent to municipalities, organizations or agencies, and property owners who may have an interest in the Project.

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Written comments should be addressed to the Bureau of Reclamation:

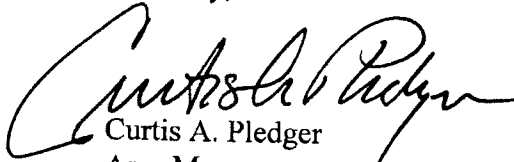
Bureau of Reclamation
Attention: Mr. Peter Crookston (PRO-774)
302 East 1860 South
Provo, UT 84606-7317
E-mail: pcrookston@usbr.gov

Comments may also be submitted via e-mail to pcrookston@usbr.gov. The Draft EA is available on the internet at www.usbr.gov/uc/envdocs/index.html. If you prefer a CD or hard copy, they are available upon request by contacting Mr. Crookston at 801-379-1152.

At the conclusion of the comment period, comments received on the Draft EA will be considered, and if no further analysis is necessary the EA will be finalized and a Finding of No Significant Impact will be prepared.

We look forward to your comments. If you have any further questions, please contact Mr. Crookston at 801-379-1152.

Sincerely,



Curtis A. Pledger
Area Manager